

FORM B - BUILDING

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
294 WASHINGTON STREET, BOSTON, MA 02108

AREA	FORM NO.
F	341



wn Lexington  
 dress 10-12-14 Vine Street  
 storic Name First Town Hall/High  
 School Building

Present residential (apartments)  
 Original town hall/school

DESCRIPTION:

ate 1846  
 Source Hudson 1913, I, p. xviii

Style Altered beyond recognition  
 Architect Isaac Melvin  
 Exterior wall fabric wood shingles  
 Outbuildings

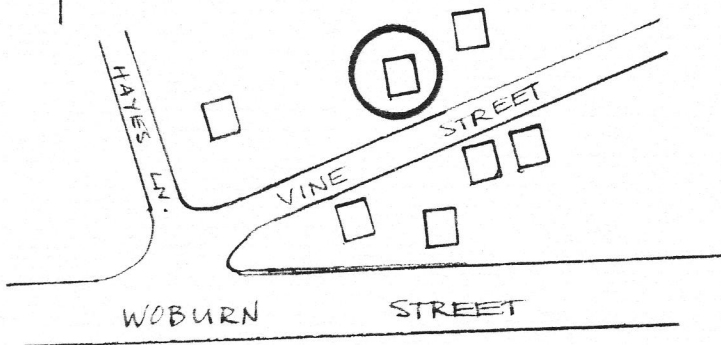
Major alterations (with dates) ashlar  
finish, long round-headed windows, and  
roof balustrade on original building  
removed (1902)

from east side of Massachusetts Avenue  
 Moved near intersection of Date 1902  
Woburn Street (site of Muzzey J.H.S.)  
 Approx. acreage 27870 ft.<sup>2</sup> (with 16-18-20)

Setting On a narrow back street; near  
many modest nineteenth-century workers  
houses.

SKETCH MAP

Show property's location in relation  
to nearest cross streets and/or  
geographical features. Indicate  
all buildings between inventoried  
property and nearest intersection.  
Indicate north.



Recorded by Nancy S. Seasholes

Organization Lexington Historical Commission

Date April, 1984

(Staple additional sheets here)

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE (Describe important architectural features and evaluate in terms of other buildings within the community.)

This bulky tenement, together with a similar building next to it, looms over the small nineteenth-century cottages in its immediate vicinity. Actually, this building was moved to this site in the early twentieth century and is comprised of the two wings of Lexington's first town hall and high school, built in 1846. Not many of the original exterior finishes survive, however, other than the brackets under the wide cornice. Photographs of the original building indicate the extent to which it was modified: the coursed ashlar wood finish

(see Continuation Sheet)

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE (Explain the role owners played in local or state history and how the building relates to the development of the community.)

This building originally stood on Massachusetts Avenue on the site now occupied by Muzzey Junior High School and was built in 1846 as Lexington's first town hall. It was designed by Isaac Melvin, a Lexington architect who also designed the Stone Building (1833) and the First Parish Church (1847), and was built by David A. Tuttle, a prominent nineteenth-century Lexington builder. According to an antiquarian account, its two-story center section flanked by one-story wings was the result of a compromise on the building committee between advocates of a two- and of a one-story building.

In 1854 Lexington established its first public high school and decided to hold classes in the central portion of the town hall; the wings were at first reserved for town business but, especially after a new town hall was built in 1871, the entire building became the high school.

By the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century the high school was in need of repairs and renovations; it was condemned in 1896 by the State Inspector as unfit for further use and finally, in 1902, the town built a new high school on the site -- the building that later became Muzzey Junior High School. The old high school was purchased by W.E. Denham and moved to Vine Street where it became tenements; this building was formed by joining the two side wings of the old school.

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES (name of publication, author, date and publisher)

David A. Tuttle papers. Lexington Historical Society archives.

Hudson, Charles. History of the Town of Lexington, revised and continued to 1912 by the Lexington Historical Society, Volume I, p. xviii. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1913.

Kelley, Beverly Allison. Lexington, A Century of Photographs, p. 62. Lexington, Massachusetts: Lexington Historical Society, 1980.

"Lexington Has Always Been Proud of Its Schools." Lexington Minute Man, December 30, 1971.

Smith, A. Bradford. "Kite End," 1891. Proceedings of the Lexington Historical Society, Volume II, p. 122. Lexington, Massachusetts: Lexington Historical Society, 1900.

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
Office of the Secretary, Boston

Community:

Lexington

Form No:

341

Property Name: 10-12-14 Vine Street

Indicate each item on inventory form which is being continued below.

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

replaced by shingles, the long round-headed windows and window frames with impost blocks and keystones simulated in wood replaced by the present ones, and the balustrade on the roof removed. A current tenant said that no original interior finishes survive.

Staple to Inventory form at bottom